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Logic Model

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Overview of the Centre

This paper provides a brief overview of the Centre including our work, approach, progress to date and our direction of travel. It should be read in conjunction with the Centre's Logic Model (see p4) that includes additional detail particularly in relation to types of research and outcomes.

1. WHAT WE DO

The Child Protection Research Centre is an innovative partnership between the University of Edinburgh and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). We conduct interdisciplinary and international research and foster dialogue to address entrenched problems in child protection.

2. WHY WE EXIST

For us 'child protection' includes all forms of harm perpetrated against children and young people whether from caregivers and adults or from other children and young people. The challenges for those working within the field of child protection are immense. Yet organisations and professionals working across the UK and internationally can and do make a difference to children. To be effective requires constant vigilance and joint working and so, at the Child Protection Research Centre, we join with those working to keep children and young people safe by bringing our research, knowledge and insights to support this important work. We want to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from all forms of child maltreatment: emotional, physical and sexual abuse, neglect and peer-to-peer harm; and where they have already been harmed, to help them recover as quickly and as fully as possible.

3. VISION AND MISSION

Preventing child abuse and neglect is our ultimate vision. We contribute to this by providing research and education to:

- Understand the scope and magnitude of child abuse and neglect;
- Identify, scale-up and evaluate promising interventions for response and prevention;
- Influence policymakers and practitioners with our research.

For us, success means that:

- Child abuse and neglect is prevented.
- All children, young people and adults who have experienced child abuse and neglect have access to the best responses and these responses are developed incorporating the views of children and young people.
- Policymakers incorporate the voice of children and young people and use evidence-based research produced by the Centre to develop and inform policies addressing child abuse and neglect.

4. AUDIENCE

Our work is designed to be appropriate for an international, multidisciplinary audience of academics, senior policymakers and professionals. It is designed to be helpful to children and young people, parents and communities. Our research is relevant to national governments, international bodies, professionals in health, social work, education, law enforcement and the criminal justice systems as well as to international development organisations.

5. HOW WE WORK

We work to ensure our research is excellent, relevant, accessible and collaborative. These are the principles and values that underpin our work:

- Delivering **excellent** research that is independent and academically robust.
- Conducting research that is **relevant** both within the devolved UK and an international context.
- Ensuring our work is **accessible** to a wide, multi-disciplinary audience including academics, senior policymakers, professionals and other users and beneficiaries of research, including children and young people.
- Actively fostering links through **collaborations** and exchanges to strengthen the work and its impact both in the UK and globally.

6. ACTIVITY

Our work encompasses all areas of child protection and has four main strands:

- **Providing research leadership and ongoing skill development** for research on child abuse and neglect. This includes participating in advisory committees, government working groups and professional bodies at both local and international levels.
- **Conducting a wide variety of child protection research** to address gaps in our understanding of the magnitude of child abuse and neglect and to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying effective response and prevention. This includes prevalence studies, systematic reviews, policy research and participatory research, among other approaches.
- **Ensuring an active programme of knowledge exchange** and sharing learning through publication and fostering links and dialogue nationally and internationally.
- **Developing an MSc in International Child Protection Research** to educate the next generation of child protection researchers who can make a contribution to the field of child protection globally.

7. OUR APPROACH TO RESEARCH

Our core work streams are established in dialogue with key stakeholders including the NSPCC, the University of Edinburgh disciplines and the Centre's Advisory Committee and draws on the extensive knowledge of others involved in child protection across the UK and internationally. To achieve our mission and vision we draw on our multi-disciplinary team to undertake research at all levels of need¹, including a particular focus on children at significant risk of harm and/or with acute or complex needs. We take a public health approach to child protection and our work is informed by the MRC framework² for complex interventions. We are committed to user involvement throughout the research process.

8. PROGRESS TO DATE

Since our inception, the Centre has undertaken specific studies in areas of identified priority and gaps in child protection research. Additionally, we have examined the direction of child protection reform, trends in policy and the impact of devolution on child protection in the UK. Collaboration is at the heart of our approach. While maintaining independence, we continue to strengthen our relationship with our founding partner – the NSPCC – and with senior policymakers and academics. Our work has been presented through publications including a book series, journal articles, reports and key message papers. Additionally, we have hosted a number of four-nation seminars, international exchange visits and we have participated on government working groups and international conferences on child protection.

¹ **Four Levels of Need Model:** Level 1 – all children and young people; Level 2 – children who are vulnerable (may be at risk of school exclusion); Level 3 – children in need (complex needs); Level 4 – children at significant risk and/or with acute needs. (Drawn from Hardiker, P., Exton, K. and Barker, M. (1991) *Policies and Practices in Preventive Child Care*. Aldershot: Avebury.)

9. AMBITIONS AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

Child protection research is growing internationally, evidenced by investment in national child abuse and neglect prevalence studies, coupled with increasing investment in promising practices to respond to and prevent child maltreatment. This highlights the growing need for child protection researchers who are at the forefront of research internationally. These large-scale investments in child protection research and evaluation also indicate that offering postgraduate training in this specialised field is vitally important and timely. The Child Protection Research Centre is well placed to contribute to the agenda of understanding the magnitude and consequences of child abuse and neglect; to evaluate and scale up effective response and prevention; and to offer bespoke postgraduate education in child protection research.

In order to achieve our mission and goals, the Centre will:

- Continue to secure funding and conduct excellent, relevant, accessible and collaborative research.
- Strengthen our networks, profile and contribution on UK and international committees, government working groups, global bodies and in other arenas with the outcome of moving the child protection field forward by our contributions.
- Reinforce our contribution to the excellent reputations of both NSPCC and the University of Edinburgh by conducting robust research, increasing our academic outputs and being at the forefront of knowledge exchange in child protection research. Two examples of how we plan to achieve this are to host the British Society of Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (BASPCAN) Conference in 2015 and to make a strong contribution to the University of Edinburgh's 2014 and 2019 Research Excellence Framework exercises.
- Develop a world-leading MSc in International Child Protection Research that builds on existing research within the Centre. We aim to foster the development of critical thinkers and independent researchers who can make a contribution to the field of child protection globally.

10. SET-UP AND GOVERNANCE

The Centre³, established in 2007, is part funded by the NSPCC and is based within the University of Edinburgh, situated within the Moray House School of Education. This unique partnership between the UK's biggest child welfare charity and a prestigious university⁴, ensures that our work has academic rigour and independence, as well as strong links to practice and policy development. We collaborate closely with our colleagues at the NSPCC to ensure the relevance of our programme design and application. We contribute to the strategic goals of excellence in education, research and innovation at the University of Edinburgh through our development of high quality academic papers, events and by our participation in University programmes and committees. Our links internationally and across the UK as well as our Advisory Committee are pivotal in ensuring the relevance and applicability of our work. In addition to funding and support from both the NSPCC and University of Edinburgh, we actively seek grants for work that meets our mission.

The research team members come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds including social policy, nursing and public health; and we ensure all research is conducted at the highest level with ongoing knowledge exchange and input from the NSPCC and other key stakeholders.

³ The Centre was previously known as the University of Edinburgh/NSPCC Centre for UK-wide Learning in Child Protection (CLICP). This name features on publications produced between 2007-2011.

